

# Birchwood Community Council

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## MINUTES

### BIRCHWOOD Community Council

Wednesday, May 8, 2024, 7-9:00 PM

Hybrid meeting: Beach Lake Ski Chalet

And via Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88131919316?pwd=RDA5ZGYrSlhORFhyOUtCM2dTRmJXdz09>

#### 1. Call to Order: 7PM

2. **Approval of April Minutes:** move to approve-by Patty, seconded by Tom P. Minutes approved

#### 3. Announcements: *(reminder please limit presentations to 5 minutes)*

a) Birchwood Airport Master Plan comment period extended to May 31, 2024-motion was voted on April 10 to support Alternative 2, but since then, and awaiting comments BCC will take more time and review all alternatives again after May 31. Val encouraged all members to look at the Plan and send in comments and that comments did not need to funnel through her as the representative for BCC.

b) FCC representative needed to take over from Carol Perkins: you can attend via Zoom or in person.

c) Peters Creek Dog Park Plan public hearing before Urban Design Commission May 22: 6:30PM-Loussac Library Assembly Chambers. Members understand about plan that it will take 49 acres, and will take out frisbee golf, and backs up to neighborhoods. Have own Park Dept-we give input to Parks board from BCC-Just finished feasibility study about 4 years ago. Google Eagle River dog park and it looks like it is actually 51.5 acres.

d) Request for 60-month time extension for Eklutna's Powder Ridge development for previously approved preliminary Plat: Council comments due May 15 and hearing date June 5 for additional homes.

e) Community Council Boundaries-10- year review-no action or comment needed at this time-BCC boundaries are pretty stable-coming forth with a plan. Hearing will be before P&Z in November.

f) Substantial Amendment #4 to SOA Action Plan for 2018 Cook Inlet Earthquake-lots of money from FEDs after the quake-public infrastructure improved-want input for substantial input for money: BCC voted and passed in support.

g) Eagle River Split Rail Fencing-repairs needed-request for capital improvement projects and this is a potential request to city and state and can be added. This is the second request for CIP and it will be added to the request list: but BCC wants to make sure this is the project to get behind. See what else is out there for projects, too. No estimate, yet of the cost of repairs or replacements.

h) JBER noise for May 6-18, 2024 was sent by Joy Boston and reported by Val

i) Need update to FB page. Ben Westveer is not receiving BCC emails. Matt will look into it.

#### 4. Reports:

a) **FCC Report:** Carol Perkins- None, unable to attend via Zoom and could not get to the meeting in Anchorage.

b) **CBERRRSA Road Board Report:** Matt Cruickshank -TIP has designed portion for resurfacing roads-flexible funding. Split rail trying to find project we all use downtown business-discuss what all councils want-pivot to new CAPSIS request. Different funding sources to do resurfacing. 2023-2024 board: Debbie Ossiander, CERAB and Co-Chair; Matt Cruickshank, Co- Chair, Road Board rep; Ben Westveer: Secretary for Publicity, Carol Perkins: Parks and Rec Alt rep; Barbara Trost, Parks and Rec rep; Patty Friend, Member at large, and CERAB alternate; Val Jokela, Secretary-Treasurer, alternate Road Board

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CAPSIS request not for resurfacing. Probably go through AMATS-Large communities-mechanism for state and federal highway repairs to go through AMATS. Week-end (July 13-14) after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Starner Bridge upgrade will start and be at 90% completion by end of July. Bid as 2-part bid with full access to Aurora B. Last minute construction agreement by 1 neighbor holding out will be a significant savings---construction agreement-resolution: AB as country lane-CBERRSA can name as country lane and dedicated resources to mitigate speed, maintenance agreement signed today. There will be more to come to address maintenance to be sure potholes are fixed the right way. There are other maintenance issues around drainage.

Tom P wanted to be sure the easement-signed maintenance agreement does not have a sunset date. (It does not.) Support speed reduction on road. Assembly approved contract. Looks like a portion of present bridge is still good: keeping i-beams, but decking will be replaced. In future will hold a lot more weight. MTP: big planning project-Hiland interchange-funding pulled from STIP-did not meet fed requirements—\$20M come to Hiland-feasibility study—3 major projects merging-plan in existing right of way: double left hand-\$8M turn lane southbound Glenn—\$13M cut across 1 lane is enough—cloverleaf, or diverging diamond-\$23M--take right hand turn-more expensive than round about. Want to close down VFW road-relocate VFW connection off of Wolf Den. Feasibility study-had first workshop last week—another work session next week. Not enough land for Dimond. Round about would be best. Landfill is redoing their gate.

c) Parks and Recreation Report: Barbara Trost-(Val reporting for Barbara)seeking FLAMI Board Members, and next board of supervisors meeting will be May 20

d) **Chugiak Eagle River Advisory Board:** Debbie Ossiander-no report

e) Treasurer's report: \$204.00.

f) **CVFD:** Chief Scott Fisher- Month if April 102 volunteers, 11 ALS, 73 calls with a total 371 calls to date, 5,083 volunteer hours for the month of April, with a total to date of 20, 470 hours. Projects: Rescue 33 replacement-Chugiak fire bond, engine 31 replacement being built. Specs 2025 for new engine. 2-year lead time. Portable radios-21 from last years budget. Ordered another 21. \$100K left-matched fire fund balance for another 21 radios. Received slightly used Suburban from Anchorage used for 2 years. Put in request for second used Suburban to get this fall. If you are a volunteer fire fighter/EMT and live in Anchorage, compensated by paying less in taxes for 10K of your property taxes. Mayor office wants to see bond go through. Areawide asset -set bad precedent letting bond go through instead of areawide EMS-did not have full time chief only volunteer chief—checks and balances failed. Went from areawide EMS to fire bond—should not have happened. Unethical-bad precedent. Board of sups hired and attorney to fight it. Have option not to enact the bond which would fix it. Rescue truck is now 25 years old.

g) **Birchwood Patrol Report:** Crime low Birchwood loop-still a problem with mail, and an individual problem-APD is handling.

h) Legislative / Assembly / School board reports:

**Scott Myers,** assembly: ballots need to be in by May 14. Tax break EMS-special meeting -override Mayor's veto—back under mil rate. District \$100K Chugiak Senior Center to replace generator. ACDA-179 abandoned and vacant properties—approach owners to redevelop—sell properties-ANC community development authority-estimate between 4-500 abandoned properties-900-2000 units total-MOA hiring across the board. Apply for boards and commissions in July meeting. CC surveys get them in. Not sure if all properties have been id—Mike Robbins is the point of contact.

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## 5. Appearances

### 6. Old Business

- a) **Birchwood Airport Master Plan:** Val Jokela-Ken McCarty noted there is a petition going out.
- b) **Alaska Long Trail Project:** Mariyam Medovaya Project Coordinator-non-profit-land managers State parks. World class trails system between Seward to Fairbanks—bike, hike goal-economic development. Web of routes-Ben Corman-currently not excited-social routes-Chugach state park to grand valley-Eagle River green belt-in Chugach State Park development plan. AK trails-does not make decisions about land managers priorities. Up to SOA and MOA. Social route not on Chugach state park plans means you can hike anywhere in the park between established trails. Sooner see a plan to id access points is important. Chugiak CC passing new resolution countermands-vote next meeting. Blue lines are completed—big trail is for snowmachining. How help? Ram Valley- fewer opposition-route developed will only go through parks land. Parking developed-not using existing roads. Idea is to create legal access through SOA parks land. BLM-Sen Murkowski-study AK long trail-feasibility study as result 18,000 postcards were sent to land owners-website has an interactive map portal-Rebecca Springhill noted the acres next to Ptarmigan trail head —massive plot above it. Paid money for parking lots and gates are locked-Pink conceptual route-discuss massive plot at Bear Mountain trail head when already have one at Ptarmigan. They don't connect. Pink one of the options goes through Birchwood. CMBR-submittal for plot to go to SOA. Proposal study park lot-request \$60K to move trail off private property.
- c) Hearing date May 20 amending Comp Plan and Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan to allow implementation of Home Initiative-Debbie Ossiander-residential zoning-doing inside Anchorage bowl-would eliminate r-1 zone-got up to 2-3 houses per lot. Radical change from how we have done zoning in the past. Our area of high density is Eagle River. Concern-no discussion as to how paid for with high density coming in-roads, utilities. Anchorage can do bonds. Developers out here are responsible. The attitude with the Mac Center road is don't worry-AMATS will fix it. Not enough forethought...Zoning would have to notify—just blanket identification of R-1.

### 7. New Business

- a) Resolution in support of Birchwood ABC PTA position to keep the school from closing-Matt/Debbie-BCV on closure list. Matt reached out to PTA and Advisory board. Weigh in with BCC resolution-join with PTA and Advisory Board- 2 resolutions-Debbie will write resolution. Ideas were presented in support: Why close school adjacent to new housing, Birchwood ABC was modeled after Northern Lights ABC—most effective as a stand-alone philosophy-School board Holleman-take ABC and put at Eagle Academy. Eagle Academy copied Birchwood's ABC. Survey how many kids opted out to Fire Lake. ¾ opted out of ABC-truly community school and support. Principal-clarify we are a neighborhood school, part of lottery if have capacity. Not true to opt out Lottery at another school—zone exemption. Look at other opportunities. Rebecca Springhill used the lottery system when she lived outside of Birchwood CC area. Strategy-empty seats at Birchwood ABC-FTE-do not have any open seats except kindergarten. How many empty classrooms---none. 2 preschool programs, and 2 life skill classes. At 240 now and was 190-brain stormed ideas to save program. Eagle River elementary, ½ Birchwood and another school were combined after the earthquake and behavioral issues stopped when all were exposed to ABC. If try move Birchwood ABC students into Eagle River academy-they are now 2 separate philosophies. Now 7 years ran short of money, and nothing was done. If close schools and take away ABC's busing problem. Timeframe discussion—all schools on chopping block- encourage public comments. Benefits of community school-strategy idea. On rented land from Eklutna and as long as it stays educationally focused, and ABC has out-performed Eagle River academy, broader push

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community school, the numbers went up-gone up thanks to Tammy-brought in lottery students. Push everyone to send in. more powerful through Birchwood CC, but contact-assembly, school board. Birchwood ABC added wing to accommodate middle school. Principal can make or break a school...ruin program. Debbie wants test scores, how many homes in Eklutna Powder ridge in future. Debbie pushed for Alpenglow, Eagle River High. Growth will be in Chugiak-Eagle River.

### **8. Action Items**

**9. Adjournment:** Patty made the motion to adjourn and Carol seconded Adjourned 9PM